

REMARKS

Claims 85-93, and 97 are pending in the present application. In the Office Action dated March 29, 2006, claims 85, 88 and 91-93 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,738,574 to Tolles et al. (“Tolles”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,149,512 to Wilson et al. (“Wilson”). Claims 85 and 89 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wilson in view of Tolles. Claims 86 and 87 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tolles in view of Wilson as applied to claim 85 above, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,093,080 to Inaba et al. (“Inaba”). Claim 90 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wilson in view of Tolles and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,135,859 to Tietz (“Tietz”).

Claim 85 has been amended to be directed to the species of former dependent claim 94. As amended, claim 85 is patentable over Tolles and the other cited references because the cited references do not teach or fairly suggest the limitations of “the conditioning body being coupled to a generally upwardly extending first support member and a generally laterally extending second support member being pivotally coupled to the first support member; transmitting a force to a force sensor indicative of the frictional force by pivoting the first support member to compress a force sensor between the first and second support members.”

Tolles teaches detecting a frictional force between a conditioning body and a polishing pad by determining the amount of torque required to drive the conditioning body. Thus, Tolles does not teach or suggest transmitting a force to a force sensor indicative of the frictional force by pivoting a generally upwardly extending first support member that is pivotally coupled to a generally laterally extending second support member in order to compress a force sensor between the first and second support members. The other cited references do not remedy this deficiency in Tolles.

All of the claims remaining in the application (claims 85-93, and 97) are now clearly allowable. Favorable consideration and a timely Notice of Allowance are earnestly solicited. The Examiner is encouraged to call the undersigned at (206) 903-8787 if they have any questions or believe that a telephone conference would expedite allowance of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

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Enclosures:

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